1610 — 5

A SERMON

vpon the Parable of the King that taketh an accompt of his seruants.

Math. 18. 23.

Wherein is declared, the iustice, mercy, and seuerity of God: the cruelty of man, and his reward for the same.

Rising vpon S^t. Peters question to Christ, Viz. How oft shall I forgiue my brother? seauen times? 21 verse.

in Matt. 18. 23.

Piat voluntarium, quod futurum est necessarium, & offeramus Deo pro muneribus quod pro debito reddere tenemur. Chrysost. hom. 10. in Mar.

BY IOHN HOSKIN, Minister of Gods holy word, student in Diuinitie.

AT LONDON
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To the right honorable

his very good Lord and patrone, *Henry Fynes* Knight, Lord Clinton and *Say, Earle of Lincolne*, Io: Hoskin wisheth health, honor, and happinesse in this *life, and in the life to come eternall felicitie.*

IN tuning of late (right Honorable) into some extraordinary consideration, of the common cruelty, and horrible oppression dayly committed, by many couetous cormorants, and cankred Catter-pillers, of this most miserable age wherein we liue, who delight (as the Prophet saith) *in nothing but in ioyning house to house, and field to field, till the poore can get no habitation*, except it be in some prison or other, (where some of these wicked wretches will not stick to say, they liue better then they do abroad. (Indeed, as some of them vse them,) Isa. 5 8.

them,) and then waying with my selfe how vile a monster, nay, how heinous, and hellish an *Hydra*, *Barbarous Cruelty* is, both in the sight of God, (*whose mercy is greater then the heauens*) and in the eyes of good men (*made after his owne Image*) which is many wayes more practised and put in execution, now in the light of the Gospell, amongst the professors of the same, which beare the name of Christians, then euer it was, either in the time of darkenesse and ignorance, or amongst the Heathen that neuer heard of God. Wherfore, beeing fully perswaded that your Lordship is both a professed foe, and an open enemie, to all bloudie *Cains*, and couetous *Ahabs*, that any way seeke the subuersion of their poore brothers, or neighbors, spirituall, or temporall, either by might, or pollicie. I therefore, being *minimus apostolorum*, whose arrowes are feathered with foule Misfortune, and whose sunne-shine of prosperitie, and warme dayes of well-fare, haue beene Eclipsed with the black clouds of cruelty, and nipping frosts of nine yeares most pittilesse imprisonment, haue not onely enterprised

Psal. 36. 5. & 108. 4
Gen. 1. 26

terprised, to pen this simple tract, of the euill seruant toward his poore fellow, but also presumed to present the same vnto your honorable view, and Christian consideration, supposing no man more worthy then your Lordship of a farre fairer peece of worke then it is: not doubting but your honor will vouchsafe, not onely to accept thereof, *as the poore widdowes mite*, with as much kindnesse, as I offer it with good-will, but also defend it, vnder the shadow of your shelter, whereby it shall bee safe, from the infection of infamous tongues. And although I haue not streined vp my strings to any high pitche, whereby to make any great sound, fine melody, or musicall harmonie, with *Orpheus* Harpe to moue dumbe, yea senslesse creatures (as it were) to listen thereunto, so soming out the frothe of mans wisdome, in making a great shew of learning (for that is not the marke I shoote at) but onely the saluation of mens soules, *for whom Christ dyed.*) Therefore according to the capacitie of the common sort, I haue tuned mine instrument with *Hypocbyens* Pipe, to play by the plainest mood, Mat. 18. 2

at the lowest Key, and sweetest sound, thereby to moue reasonable men (if it might be) to learne some-thing towards the saluation of their poore soules, because *wee are not sent to Preach with wisdome of words, for fiue words to edifying is better then ten thousand not vnderstood.* Wherein if I haue any wayes passed the bound of modestie, whereby to offend your Lordships patience, or committed any thing distastfull to your honorable conceit, I most humbly craue pardon for the same, attending to receiue the punishment due to mine imperfections. But if I haue pleased the least part of your Lordships good liking, I shall most happily rest contented at the dore of your deuotion, and lowest step of your foote-stoole. And so leauing the crew of all *cursed Caines*, and all couetous *Ahabs*, with all such canker-wormes of crueltie and mercilesse misers, in the midst and maine sea of their monstrous mallicious mindes, and your Lordship as a most worthy pillar, and protector of all poore oppressed persons, to weede out the wicked, and defend the innocent, with the sworde

1.Cor.1. 17.27. & 14.19.

sworde of Iustice, whereby *Mercy* and *Charitie* may bee well planted, the Kings Maiestie the better preserued, the common wealth best gouerned, and God most of all glorified, I most humbly take my leaue. *From the Fleete.*

1608.

Your Honours

poore distressed, in all Christian dutie euer to be commanded:

IO: HOSKIN, Minister of Gods word.

9. yeares prisoner.

To the Christian Reader.



Beseech you by the mercies of God, in his sonne Iesus Christ, *and by all the Christian kindnesse, which I hope to finde at your handes, to perswade your selues, that what so euer I haue set downe in this simple Treatise, is rather to describe the nature of cursed Cruelty, then to taxe any man with the infection of that pestilent disease and hellish humor. The labour is but short, the Sence plaine, whose substance I referre either to the censure of your courteous discretion, or kindnesse of your gentle correction, and so with my vnfeined loue to your good desert, I rest as cause I shall require.*

Yours euer in the Lord,

IO: HOSKIN.

The Parable of the king

and his euill seruant.

Math. 18. 23.

The kingdome of heauen is likened vnto a certaine King, which would take an accoumpt of his seruants.

According to the obseruation, and writings of the learned and antient Fathers, there are seauen speciall Parables of great consolation and comfort, declared and set downe by our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, at seuerall times in the holy Gospell. Amongst the which, this, touching the forgiuenesse of ten thousand Talents, is one of the chiefe, wherein the holy spirit of GOD, doth not onely breath this, but with all doth teach vs a most necessarie ducie of Christian charitie, which the Heathen knew not, and many that beare the name of Christians, say they know, but will neither vse, nor practise towards their poore brethren, which the Apostle

Apostle calleth forbearing and forgiuing
Col.13.3 one another. Which is so necessarie a
disposition, as that our Sauiour Christ
the author thereof, doth annexe and
ioyne it vnto his prayer, in the holy
Gospell, saying, Except yee forgiue men
Mat.6.15. their trespasses, your heauenly father will
not forgiue you.

The occasion hereof was the question which Saint Peter moued vnto our Sauiour Christ, verse.21. How oft shall I forgiue my brother? vnto seauen times? wherein he presumeth two things.

1. First that men must forgiue.

2. Secondly, that they must forgiue more then once. For there is a generation in the world that come of the seede of curssed Caine, such as Lamech was, who will put vp no wrong, nor (as they say) do no right, but will bee reuenged
Gen.4 24 like him seuentie times seauen times,
Rom.2.4 scoffing (as it were) at the long sufferance of God, in not punishing Cain, for killing his brother Abell. As though God would suffer him to murther his brother, and not be reuenged of such monstrous cruelty. Yes, *mihi vindicta & ego*

ego retribuam: vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord. Ro. 12, 19

2. Secondly, the Apostle presumeth, that a man must forgiue more then once, because the Heathen that knew not God, would forgiue once, but no more, who condemne many that beare the name of Christians, and professe the Gospell, yea such as ought to be examples of loue, and charitie vnto others, who will not forgiue any one iniurie (be it neuer so small) but will be reuenged one way or other, *Quoq́, iure, quaque iniuria*, either by law, or by violence, for euery trifle: nay, as Tully saith, *Nonnulli aggrediuntur ad iniurias faciendum, vt adipiscantur ea quæ concupierunt*. There be some that enterprise to doe iniurie, that they may obteine those things, which they couet and desire, cleane contrary to the word of God, which commandeth all men to do as they would be done vnto. Mat. 7. 12 But *hi petunt inferas vt discant verum esse in morte, quod in vita credere noluerunt*, These goe to the Deuill, that they may learne it to bee true at their death, which they would not be- Ambros.

leaue all their life time.

Againe, there be some that thinke, that Peters meaning is, by this question, to learne of our Sauiour Christ, whether a man hauing forgiuen seauen iniuries, may afterwards be reuenged, if occasion be offered. Others thinke his question is, as if he said, it is too much: shall I forgiue till seauen times? but our Lord and maister Christ, (the true patterne of Christian charitie,) answering this his question, exceedeth Peters expectation: saying, not seauen times: but seuenty times seuen times, which is 490. vers. 22.

Doctrine. The doctrine whereof teacheth vs thus much, viz. that all such as belong vnto Christ, should be as bountifull in mercy, forgiuenesse, loue and charitie, as Lamech professed he would be in reuenge, mallice, wrong and cruelty. For by mercy, loue and charity, wee are knowne to be the Disciples of Christ, and children of God. But by reuenge and crueltie, the very impes of hell, and darlings of the Deuill, for there shall bee condemnation merciles to him that

Ioh. 13. 35.

Iam. 2. 13

sheweth

sheweth no mercy. From hence also we learne, that it is no wise mans course, to determine, how farre we should extend our mercy: for saith our Sauiour Christ, thy mercy is the measure of ioy: *sicut et ego tibi*, euen as I had pittie on thee, vers. 33. so should we. 2. Doct.

But such as would haue a certaine number set downe, how oft they should forgiue their brother, and a proportion for practising of their mercy: desire that GOD should forgiue them a certaine number of times, & afterwards powre downe his anger, and heauie wrath vpon them.

Expositio et diuisio.

The key of the opening and vnderstanding of this Parable, is vers. 35. where the King is the heauenly father, we the seruants: The debt sinne, and the fellow seruants our poore neighbours, and Christian brethren.

In this Parable (as the antient Fathers doe note) there are two parts, a white part, and a black, viz. a good example to be followed, and a bad to bee eschewed and auoyded; as wee are exhorted by the Prophets, to shew euill, and

Psa. 34. 13 and doe good, seeke iudgement, releeue
Isa. 1. 16. 17 the oppressed, &c. Now if we diuide it after the King himselfe, there we may be-
Ro. 11, 22 hold, both the bountifulnesse and seueritie of God.

1. First the great mercy and bountie of the King, in forgiuing his seruant a debt of ten thousand Talents.

2. Secondly his seueritie, in turning his debt vpon his head, who hauing bin forgiuen a great debt, would not forgiue his fellow seruant a small debt.

The white part. In the former part there are two things to be considered.

1. First, the persons; which are two.

2. Secondly, the proceedings, which are of iustice. The proceedings according to iustice, are declared in the 25. ver. where it is said, because he had nothing to pay, his Lord commanded him to bee sould, &c. The proceedings according to mercy, vers. 27. his Lord had compassion and loosed him, and forgaue him, &c.

Either of which, I could wish were executed now adayes amongst vs, that beare the name of Christians, & professe the Gospell, for then there should not

so

so many poore men pine and perish in prison, to the vtter vndoing of their wiues and children for euer.

Whereby we may see euidently, that the proceedings of mercy, which consist in our imitation, and which we ought to practise, are vtterly neglected and abolished.

1. In the blacke part, first we are to obserue, how the euill seruant (being forgiuen) behaued himselfe towards his fellow seruant, which is to be seene, vers. 28, & 30. Taking him by the throate and casting him in prison. The blacke part.

2. Secondly how he was serued, for his barbarous & most cruell dealings, which also consisteth of two parts.

1 First in respect of his fellow seruants.

2. Secondly in respect of his maister.

Generally we are to learne & obserue thus much, that this is a plaine mirror of Gods great mercie and goodnesse, who requireth nothing of vs, but what he first performeth towards vs: as the Apostle saith, *in how comended his charitie*, Rom. 5. 8. in this: God setteth out his loue towards vs, that when we were sinners

Christ dyed for vs. And therefore it is but equall dealing, that we should (after his example) shew mercy vnto our brethren: and we must not onely doe to an other, as we would haue others doe to vs (which the law of nature teacheth vs to bee equall) but as wee would haue God do vnto vs. For wee must forgiue our brethren, not onely as wee would haue them forgiue vs, but as we looke, and hope to be forgiuen at the hands of Almighty God.

Now for the persons: and first for the King, which is Almighty God, who setteth out himselfe in the Scriptures, by sundry resemblances, as to an husbandman, a Sheepheard, a Fisher, a Merchant and here a King.

Math. 13 Ioh. 10.

And in this there is a very deepe reach, for our nature is so bewitched, that many times, we thinke that the practise of godly and Christian vertues, will vtterly disgrace vs; as it is gathered by the ancient Fathers vpon the Canticles, where it is said, I haue put off my coate, how shall I put it on? I haue washed my feete, how shall I defile them?

Can. 5. 3.

If we forgiue any little wrong that is offered vs (especially by our inferiours,) nay if they doe not patiently endure, and quietly put vp, any cruell, and intollerable iniuries, and open wrongs, that we do offer vnto them, we thinke our selues both much abused, & foulie abused, whether it be in their body, goods or name, yea many, but vpon a supposed offence, will not onely offer iniurie, but also seeke reuenge for the same, yea euen vnto the death, which is a most detestable furie, far passing the nature of wilde beasts, which spare the bloud of their fere. Therfore saith Socrates, Reuenge is not in any sort to be vsed, nor is it iust to offend any, although hee had offered vs wrong: for the Lord is the auenger of all such things, *& oppresso in refugium*, and defence for the oppressed: but we neuer remember it.

Iniury offereth three ways.

Socrat.

1. Thes. 4. 6 Psal. 9. 9.

Our heauenly father (when he will teach vs this most excellent vertue of mercy) bringeth in himselfe as a king, to teach vs that it is a princely thing to forgiue, for so saith Christ himselfe, I wil haue mercy & not sacrifice. that is, what

Mat. 9. 13. pro. 21. 3.

care I for your sacrifices, as long as your liues, and conuersations are wicked, and full of pride, oppression, couetousnesse, usury, bribery, extortion, adultry, murder, drunkennesse, Idolatrie, malice, enuie, vndoing and deuouring of eache other, &c. And therefore exhorteth vs vnto reconciliation, before wee come to offer any gift, else it is but in vaine to pray, forgiue vs our trespasses.

Mat. 5. 24 & 6. 12.

Eccle. 28. 3. 4. Therefore forgiue thy neighbor the hurt that hee hath done vnto thee, so shall thy sinnes bee forgiuen thee also, when thou praiest. For should a man beare hatred against man? and desire forgiuenesse of the Lord? hee will shew no mercy to a man, which is like himselfe, and will hee aske forgiuenesse of his owne sinnes? If hee that is but flesh nourish hatred, and aske pardon of God, who will intreate for his sinnes? Therefore remember the end, and let enmitie passe; for *misericors & clemens est dominus.* The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, whose example wee ought to follow. And, *Pius quotidie miseretur & dat mutuum*, a good

Psal. 103. 8

man

man is euer mercifull and tendeth, saith the Prophet, preferring mercy before iudgment in his song, and mercy reioyceth against iudgement. Therefore bee mercifull, as your heauenly Father is mercifull. For God had rather want the sacrifice due vnto him, then mercy and reconciliation should bee wanting, betwixt thee and thy brother. Pſ. 17.26. & 101.1. Iam. 2.13. Luc. 6.13. Chryſoſt.

To pardon and forgiue, is the part of a man, to reuenge is the part of a beast. Then how many beasts be there now adayes amongst vs, who voyde of all mercy, pitty, or any sparke of compassion, seeke not onely reuenge, but the vtter spoile, subuersion, and distruction of their poore neighbours, and needy brethren, who would faine dwell in quiet by them. Therefore spoyle not his resting place: for the Lord will spoile the soule of them that spoile them. Pitacus. Amos 4.1 Pro. 3. 29. & 24. 15. & 22. 23.

In Athens there was a Temple dedicated vnto Mercy, into the which none might enter that were not helpe-full and beneficiall vnto others, which caused the people, but

especially the Magistrates, and men of authority and calling, to studie and exercise workes of pitty and piety, through a desire, which they had to enter therein. Now therefore if they which had not any knowledge of God nor his word, in respect of that which we haue now, in the light of the Gospell, did so much respect the workes of mercie, and compassion, pitty and piety, for the desire they had to enter into an earthly temple: what ought wee to doe for the entrance into the celestiall and euerlasting temple of the Lord, and the endlesse habitation in the same, where there are such ioyes as no mortall eyes haue seene, eares haue heard, tongue can expresse, or heart conceine?

1. Cor. 2. 9

Psal. 15. 1. 2. 3.

The Prophet Dauid asketh, *quis habitabit in tabernaculo domini?* Who shall dwell in the holy temple of the Lord? and answereth: *Qui operatur iustitiam; neque fecit malum proximo suo.* He that worketh righteousnesse, and hath not done euill to his neighbour. None else? no. Then what shall become of all tyrants, oppressors, bloudy builders, murderers, backbiters,

biters, ſlanderers, biting vſurers, brybers, extortioners, couetous perſons, that take rewards againſt the innocent: & ſuch like, as falſe ſwearers, & knights of the poſt: and thoſe that vſe falſe weights and meaſures: ſurely theſe, and all ſuch (without ſpædy and vnfeined repentance) muſt nædes fall and be caſt downe, with that mercileſſe churle into hell, who would ſhew no mercy vnto poore Lazarus, as the Prophet affirmeth, ſaying: *Conuertentur impij in infernum, et omnes gentes, qui obliuiſcuntur dei.* The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God, who is the fountain of all mercy, pitty & compaſſiõ. Luc. 16. Pſa. 9. 17.

Therfore let all bloudy Cains, théeuiſh Achans, bribing Gehezies, couetous Ahabs and Iezebels, all Labans and Naballs, with all the rable of rent-rackers, take hèd and remember, that *Dominus ſibi virum pium ſegregauit*, the Lord hath choſen to himſelfe the man that is godly. *Sed qui loquuntur mendãcium, & virum ſanguinum abhominabitur*, but abhorreth both the lyer, and blood-thirſty man. Pſal. 4. 3. & 5. 6.

Man is called *homo*, from whence this

word *humanitas* is deriued, which signifieth curtesie, or gentlenesse, for which
Plato. cause Plato calleth him a ciuill creature, by nature sociable and mercifull, and therefore saith, that Mercy ought no more to be taken away from the nature of man, then the altar out of the temple.
Pro. 14. 21 The sinner despiseth his neighbour saith Salomon, but hee that is mercifull to the poore is blessed, and he that hath pitty on the poore lendeth vnto the Lord, who
& 19. 17. will recompence him that which he hath giuen. I might alleadge many reasons & diuerse arguments, to moue vs vnto loue and charity, pitty and mercy towards our poore brethren & needy neighbours: as first the creation of man after
Gen. 1. 26. the Image of God, wherevnto we owe all honor, loue, and obedience. Secondly the re-establishment into the same Image by his pure grace & mercy. Thirdlie the contemplation & building of this glorious frame of man, with the excellent composition thereof, in whom the brightnes and grace of God shineth, but especially in those whom the world despiseth. Further, if we did but consider,

that

that we are of one mould, haue one maker, and one God, who promiseth to accept as done to himselfe, what good so euer we doe to one of his little ones, of whom, some for want of succour and relieſe, are ready to ſtarue in the ſtreetes, others pine and periſh in priſon, and all for want of the due execution of iudgement and iuſtice, as well towards the riche as the poore, the creditor as the debtor, wherby the widdow and fatherleſſe, the innocent and friendleſſe, are ſtill oppreſſed, ſome time by delayes, ſome time by demurres, and ſome time by *ad idem in proximum*, (which things are good in themſelues, but being abuſed are very bad) and many times bribes blind the eyes of the wiſe, & peruert true iudgement, but woe vnto the bribers and extortioners. Did not their fathers liue well and proſper, when they executed iuſtice without reſpect of perſons? But they haue peruerted all equity, & abhorred iudgment, and iudged for rewardes: And thus the peoples skinnes are puld and pluckt from their backes: thus they are bought and ſolde for old ſhoes: Mat.25. Ier 7.5.6. & 22.3. Looke into all priſons. Exo.23.8 Deu.16 Ier.22.15. Prou.18.5 Mich.3. Pro.17.23 Amos.8.

and

and thus they are eaten vp and deuoured
Psa 14.8 like bread, whereas we ought not onely
Galla. to do good, & shew mercy vnto all men,
but euen to them that do vs wrong and
hate vs: according to our Sauiour
Christs commandement: Loue your ene-
Mat.5.44 mies, bless them that curse you, do good
to them that hate you, and pray for them
that persecute you.

Ioseph was a great person, yet thought
Gen.25. it no disgrace to forgiue his brethren.
15. *Dauid* a King, did shew mercy vnto his
1.Sam.24 enimie *Saul*, and forgaue *Shemei* his of-
2.Sam.16 fence in cursing him, *Steuen* them that
Acts 7.60 stoned him, and our *Sauiour Christ* those
Lu 23.34 that put him to death.
Pro.20.28

Thus we see it is not onely a princely,
but also a most diuine thing to pardon
and forgiue our brethren: for the King
that here setteth forth him as an exam-
ple is God himselfe. Therefore if wee
will be honorable, or so accompted, we
must learne our termes of honor from
our Lord and maister Iesus Christ, & not
from the race of cursed Cain, or reueng-
full Lamech. And the more honorable
that a man is, so much the more it is his
honor,

honor, to be moſt ready to forgiue, and put vp wrong, without ſeeking reuenge: but as the Prophet ſaith; *Homo in honore non intelliget, ſed comparatur iumentis que intereunt*, Man being in honor, hath no vnderſtanding, but may be compared vnto the beaſts that periſh; eſpecially when they vndoe their poore brethren, by oppreſſion, ſuites in lawe, fraude, or impriſonment, for euery light occaſion. Nay, without any iuſt cauſe, but it is an old ſaying, Where the hedge is loweſt, the beaſt ſooneſt goeth ouer, and the weakeſt are ſooneſt put to the worſt. Therefore I may ſay with that old Father; If beaſts could ſpeake, they would call ſuch wicked men beaſts, and farre worſe. For as Saint Auguſtine ſaith: Brute beaſts do rauen but when they are hungry, and being full do ſpare the prey. But theſe beaſts, the more they haue, the more they rauen and ſpoile, whereby it appeareth, they neither feare God in heauen, King on earth, nor deuill in hell. *Creſcit amor nummi quantum ipſa pecunia creſcit*: The loue of money encreaſeth as the money it ſelfe encreaſeth: the more they

Pſ. 49. vlt. Eccl. 3 18

A prouerb.

Bernard in Can.

Auguſt.

they haue the more they desire, like fire, the more wodde the more heate: therefore the couetous mans heart is compared vnto a bottomlesse purse, which is neuer full: or like the Horseleche that Salomon speaketh of, the graue and the barren wombe, which will neuer be satisfied.

Pro. 30. 15 16

Amos. 1. 3

Thus the poore are threshed to death with Flailes, as the Prophet saith: this is the malicious sinne which Dauid prayeth against, saying, *Ne miserearis omnibus qui peruerse et iniquè agunt:* bee not mercifull to them that offend of malice: for as Iob saith, fire shall consume their houses.

Psal. 59. 5

Iob. 15. 34

I would that such cruell men, and seekers of reuenge, would remember the words and deeds of Philip King of Macedon, who when it was told him that one Nicanor (a nedy fellow) did speake euill of him, because hee neuer did him good, the kings seruants gaue him counsell to punish him. Nay quoth the King, not so. I suppose he is a good man, therefore it were better to search first if the fault be not in vs. The King vnderstanding

ing that Nicanor was a poore man, ſent him a rich preſent, whereupon afterwards this fellow ſpake as much good of the King openly for his bountie, as euer he did euill of him for his couetouſneſſe. Whereby we ſee it is in the power of great men themſelues, to cauſe either euill or good to be ſpoken of them.

Likewiſe Antigonus King of Macedon, hearing himſelfe euill ſpoken of by ſoldiers hard by his tent, came forth vnto them, and ſaid nothing but thus. Good Lord could you not haue gone farther off, to haue ſpoken euill of me? Thus far off were theſe two Kings from reuenging their owne priuate quarrels, which might be a good example vnto all men of what eſtate or degree ſo euer they bee, how they ſeeke reuenge againſt ỹ poore. Antigon.

But now *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*, the caſe is cleane altred, for euery man (for the moſt part) will moſt cruelly reuenge the iniuries done to himſelfe, & pardon thoſe which are done againſt other, yea many times, although they be directly againſt the law & honor of God. And therfore as Xenophon ſaith Xenoph.

in

in his Cyropædia, let euery one so behaue himselfe towards his enemy, as at some time or other hee may thinke to haue him his friend.

Secondly now touching the seruants, wherein we haue 4. things to obserue.

First, that sinne hath the nature of a debt, for so our Saniour Christ teacheth vs to pray: forgiue vs our debts, and so sinners are called debtors, as Mary Magdalen was, who had her sinnes forgiuen her, which afore were accompted debts. For the case of the law, it is as an obligation, wherein if the condition be not kept, we do incurre the penaltie.

Luc. 16.5
Luc. 7.47

Secondly, we are to note a difference betwixt sinnes and debts. For sinnes, which are against God, are compared vnto talents: sinnes against our brethren, are but as pence.

Thirdly, the debt is not of one, but of ten thousand talents: *hec nõ summa, sed massa*, this is not a summe, but a mas of money. And as before, we saw the enormitie of sinne, so here we may beholde the multitude of our sinnes.

Fourthly, it is said, *adductus est*, hee

was

was brought: which bringing, sheweth that he neuer toke care, or any thought, how to pay his debt. He eate his meate and toke his rest, hee liued merily, and quietly, in pompe and pleasure, which is the case of many now adayes, in respect of sinne, wherein most securely they are lulled and rocked fast a slepe, yet their case is most dangerous, and most lamentable, and nothing else, but that which our Sauiour Christ speaketh of in the Gospel: *Fortis sic omnia possidet*; the strong man possesseth all things so in peace; as for example, a Captaine hauing quiet possession of a castle or strong hold, what needeth he to make any broiles, or drabbles: euen so it is with our aduersary the Deuill, *sic omnia possidet*, doth so quietly possesse the hearts and mindes, (which are as the Castles and holdes of many couetous wretched worldlings) and hath so rocked them a slepe in the Cradle of Securitie, that they neuer make any accompt of many sinnes which they daily commit, both against God & man: especially of petty sinnes, as iesting, scurrulous talke, wantonnesse, idlenesse, and

A secure sinner.

Luc. 11. 21.

Simile.

and riotous expences, &c. for the which they scorne to be controuled or admonished of by any man, which is a token of reprobation: for let all such know, that as many small drops of raine do make a great flood, able to drowne both horse and man, so many small sinnes do make a great and dangerous deluge, able to drowne both body and soule.

Therfore saith the Psalmist, *Cogitabo,* Psa. 38. 18
et arguam eos pro peccato, I will confesse my wicked nesse, and bee sory for my sinne. & 32. 6.
And, *confessionem faciam de peccatis meis domino, et tu remisisti, iniquitatem peccati mei:* I will confesse my sinnes vnto the Lord, and thou forgauest the wickednesse of my sinne. According to that saying of Augustine. *Audiui regem dicentem peccaui Domino, et Prophetam respondentem transtulit dominus peccatum tuum a te.* I heard the King say I haue sinned against the Lord, and the Prophet make answer: the Lord hath taken thy sinnes from thee. August.
Therefore the wise mans aduise is, if Prou. 6. 1
thou bee surety for another, humble thy selfe, and vse all meanes to discharge the debt: till then giue thine eyes no

slape.

slæpe. But this fellow taketh no such order, but was secure and careleſſe, and so was fit to be brought.

Such is our securitie in respect of sinne, we take no thought for it, we neither striue by prayer against it, before we commit it, nor yet are we humbled after it, but many are such as Salomon speaketh of, *Qui letantur cum male fecerint, et exultent in rebus peſſimis*, they are glad when they haue done euill, and reioyce in things most wicked: vntill God by some crosse or affliction, by some meanes or other bring vs vnder arrest. Such may fitly be compared vnto theeues in a Jayle, who neuer remember the assises, vntill the iudge come riding in at townes end. Nay rather like condemned felons, who fall merily to gaming, sport, and passime with the halters about their necks, wherewith their breath must bee stopped. Euen so, many secure sinners neuer thinke on their ende, vntill by-giue Death arrest and seize vppon them: and what is this? but euen, the Oxe to the slaughter, and the foole

Pro. 2. 14.

Simile.

Pro. 7. 22.

to

to the ſtocks, neuer thinking of death or punishment, which is a moſt wofull caſe, the Lord amend it.

A deſperat ſinner.

There is alſo an other kind of ſinners, who being but weake in minde and conſcience, & not well acquainted with the ſweet promiſes of ỹ goſpel, being pricked in conſcience with the burden of their ſins & then remembring the curſſe of the law due for the ſame, which no man is, (or euer was) able to beare, but only our Sauiour Chriſt: alas, what a miſerable caſe are theſe in? let them remember

Exe. 18. 21

that at what time ſoeuer a ſinner doth repent him of his ſinnes from the bottome of his heart, the Lord will blot them out of his remembrance, & that the ſeruants Lord had compaſſion, and forgaue him the debt, as ſoone as hee humbly beſeeched him. 27. *verſe*.

Lactan.

Now for the two proceedings: and firſt of Juſtice. Juſtice as ſaith Lactantius, in reſpect of God, is called godlineſſe, but in reſpect of our ſelues, & our

Cicero.

dealings with men, it is taken for an equall diſtribution of right, & of lawes, and as Cicero ſaith, it is a perpetuall

and

and a constant desire, and god will to giue euery one his right, and his owne, especially as the party is greater, chiefly the King must haue his right: but in respect of God, and the duties which we are to performe vnto him, if he should take an accompt of vs, wee are not able to answer him one of a thousand, and as the Psalmist saith, *Si iniquitates obseruaueris domine quis consistet?* If thou shouldest bee extreame to marke what is done amisse, O Lord who may abide it? Iob. 9. 3. Psal. 103

Then if not able to pay (which was the case of this seruant) all his goods must be praised, and sale must bee made according to the law; but not as many vnder Sheriffes and common Bayliffes doe often times in the countrie with poore mens goods, playing sweepe-stake for their owne aduantage and gaine, whereby the poore debtor, his wife and children are vtterly vndone, because his goods are praised and sold, not at a quarter the rate which they are worth, and neuer can haue them againe of which hard dealings, I haue beene *Oculatus testis*; but as Elisha sayd to the poore

Nota, quam iniuriam, in sons ego in-se, bis iustissimo omnia omnino perdidi.

1. Reg. 4. 7 widdow: sell thy oyle and pay thy debts, and liue vpon the rest. So doth the King command him, his wife and children, and all that he had, to be solde, and payment to be made, vers. 25. which were a happy course for many poore men, which commonly pine and perish in prison, by the cruelty of the creditors, there spending that little which they haue, and at length were lenuing their liues, as Snakes doe their slackles in old hedges, whereby the leanneſſe of impouerished persons, make fatte prisons, and Iaylers Gentlemen: where ten shillings a weeke for a bare Chamber and a bed-stead, is nothing; where seuentie pound a yeare for a drunken Taphouse is but a little, else how should the rent of a Iayle bee at a thousand pound a yeare.

But *ad rem*, I know this lawe of sale which the King commanded to bee made, nor the doctrine thereof, neither tasteth well in the mouthes, nor is it pleasant in the stomaches of those, whome wee in plaine English call Bankrupts: who vpon credit, will take vp

vp as much money and goods, as they can gette into their hands, and then breake (as they call it) with their Creditors, contrary to their promise, bonds, faith, and all honestie, taking vp their lodging in Ludgate, or some Sanctuarie, and there liuing in ease and pleasure, letting out their money to Vsury with a bad conscience, paying their Creditors with two shillings in the pound, or some such matter, thinking this no theft, nor any deceit at all, cleane contrary to Saint Paules rule, concerning debters: Owe nothing to any man, but this, that yee loue one another, and the last commandement, thou shalt not couet thy neighbours goods, or thou shalt not steale, those yee which. Rom. 13. 8 Exod. 20 17. 15

But when the King commeth to take accompt of his seruants, vers. 23. they shall finde, that all such subtill shifts, and deceitfull deuises shall proue but Figge leaues, not able to couer their cursed couetousnesse; nor yet to defend them from the wrath of him, who is *scrutator cordis*, the searcher out of their hollow hearts, and seard consciences. Gen. 3. 7 Ier. 17. 10 1. Tim. 4. 2

Now if we should apply this to a spi-
rituall consideration, it would fitte vs
very well: for as the Apostle saith, wee
Rom.7.14 are all sold vnder sinne, and *totus mundus*
1.Ioh.5,19 *in maligno positus est*; all the world is set
vpon wickednesse: and as the Prophet
Psal.14.2. saith, *Corruperunt vias suas, abominabile*
& 53.2. *fecerunt studium, non est qui facit bonum*,
they are all corrupt and become abhomi-
nable in their doings, there is none that
dooth good, no not one.

But here I leaue these, and goe for-
ward to the procéedings of mercy.

Mercy being the most excellent ver-
tue, and the toy of faith, the author
whereof is God himselfe, whose mercy
Luc. 1. 50 is euerlasting, will heare the crye of the
Exo.22.27 afflicted, and will neuer forsake them, be-
& 4.31. cause he is mercifull, yea as Dauid saith,
Prope adest Dominus omnibus invocanti-
Psa.145.18 *bus eum in veritate*, The Lord is nigh vnto
all that call vpon him faithfully: he heard
Gen. 35. Iacob in all his troubles, & Moses when
Exod.14 he sighed and groned, Anna that barren
1.Sam.1 woman was not forgotten, nor Daniel
in the Lions den, nor Susanna amongst
Dan. 3. & 13. the wicked Iudges, nor the three children

in

in the fierie Furnace, nor Peter in prison: and so likewise, as wee may see verse. 26. by this seruant, when hee besought his maister, hee heard him, and had compassion vpon him. Act. 11.

Wherein wee haue to learne, that prayer and humble supplication vnto God, is the onely meanes to preserue vs from condemnation for sinne: for by that meanes he was forgiuen his debt. *Quia rogasti*, because thou prayedst mee, vers. 21. For so saith the Prophet Dauid, if a man will bee deliuered from his sinnes, *Pro hoc orabit omnis*, for this shall euery one pray. And Saint Peters aduice is, Pray God, that if it bee possible the thoughts of thy heart may bee forgiuen thee: as that godly Father also teacheth, saying: *Ab eo petatur, in te quaeratur, ad te pulsetur, sic accipietur, sic inuenietur, sic aperietur.* Of thee we must aske, at thee we must seeke, & at thee we must knock, so we receiue, so we finde, and so to vs it is opened: which doctrine is cleane contrarie to the vile blasphemous Papists, which pray either vnto stocks or stones, Doctrine. Psal. 32. 6. Act. 8. 22. *August. lib. confes. 13. cap. vlt.*

Images, Saints, Angels, or the Virgin Mary.

Also, here we may see, that by a submisse intercession, we must remoue from the Court of Gods iustice, vnto the Court of Gods mercy. And vpon this second proceeding, behold the bountifulnesse of the King, who for a few words speaking, forgiueth him the debt, when he had nothing to pay, as we read in the Gospell; he doth not onely grant him that which hee desired, which was Luc. 7.42 but forbearance, but also much more abundantly, according to the saying of the Apostle, he is able to doe aboundantly Eph. 3.20 aboue all that wee can aske or desire. For whereas he desired but onely to be forborne, by his humility and prayer, he doth obtaine both dylation and remission, he doth not onely forget, but also forgiue, and remit the debt: for here the necessitie and effect of humble prayer. And that which is a third thing to bee remembred, euen at that time when he sate vpon his iudgement seate, to take a reckoning and strict account: as the Prophet saith; He doth in wrath

remem-

remember mercy, which is a lesson, both Hab.3.2
for Judges, that sitte to heare the causes of poore distressed men, and also of great consolation and comfort to all those that are oppressed and heavy laden with the burthen of their sinnes, Mat.11.2
that the nature of the Deitie is thus slowe to wrath, and ready to forgive, which is or might bee an example unto all men, but especially unto great men, and Magistrates, that they should immitate this thing in mercy, which is Almighty GOD, whose mercy indeed, should be the example of ours, and our mercy the measure of his. For man being a creature made of God, after his divine image, just, holy, good, and right Gen. 1.2
by nature, framed of the earth, and inspired with spirit and life, hath his being, and his well being, onely to set forth the glory of his Creator, and to speake and do those things which are agreeable unto him, which is, to bee mercifull, as Pro.21.2
hee is mercifull. Thus we see the sen- Luc. 6.3
verity and pointe of the King.

Now secondly we are to take a view how he dealt with his fellow servant.

A body would thinke, that after his impriſon of feare, that was condemned to bee ſold, and contrariwiſe, the great affection of loue and compaſſion in the King in forgiuing the debt, vpon his humble intreatie, he would neuer haue forgotten the gentleneſſe of his maiſter. But we may ſée it to be true, which the Apoſtle ſaith, There is an euill ſpirit which luſteth after enuie, which is a griefe ariſing at another mans proſperitie, with which vice this euill ſeruant was ſowly infected, as there bee many now adayes ſick of that diſeaſe, who grudge and grieue, mumble and murmure, if they ſée any man thriue, come to any preferment, or haue any good ſucceſſe in his affaires, more then themſelues, or bee accompted honeſter then they: wee our ſelues and euery one, for his owne part, is ſick of ſelfe-loue, for we can be content to be well vſed, well ſpoken of, and praiſed: yea, to haue our faults couered, and our offences and debts forgiuen vs, without any ſcrupulouſitie or quaintneſſe, both at Gods hand and mans, which is a bleſſed thing,

Iam 4.5 What enuie is.

2. Tim. 3. 2

as the Prophet saith: but wee cannot Psal. 32. 1
finde in our hearts to mete the same measure againe vnto others, notwithstanding our Sauiour Christ in his holy Gospell teacheth vs, that with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to Math. 7. 2
vs againe; There is in this part three carnall sinnes.

1. First he was his fellow seruant, of the same estate, no stranger vnto him, but one that he knew well enough, yea a brother, which hath matter to stirre vp compassion, especially in any man that hath any sparke of Christianitie in him.

God cannot offend man, yet he forgiueth man: but man may offend man, and yet will not forgiue man, hee might after offend his fellow seruant, and therefore ought to forgiue him before he did it.

2. Secondly the debt was no great matter, but an hundred pence, and therfore he might the more easily haue forgiuen it, for as much as GOD forgaue him a great mas of money.

3. Thirdly, this debt he will not for-

giue,

giue, although it be but small, but requireth it after a most inhumaine and sauage manner, taking him by the throte, and saying, pay mee that thou owest, vers. 28. To the which wee adde three parts more.

1. First going forth but euen from the presence of his Maister as soone as he had beene forgiuen, hee beginneth to bee vnmercifull, that hauing receiued mercy at Gods hands, he is so cruell to his fellow seruant, that addeth a great heynousnesse vnto his crime.

2. Secondly, in that his fellow vseth the same meanes to him, which he vsed vnto God, *viz.* I pray thee haue patience: *gnimrogasti*, because thou prayedst mee, was the reason why the Lord forgaue him, yet he will not forgiue his fellow, who vsed the same words vnto him.

3. Thirdly, *non moueri saltem conscientia*, not to be moued one whit in conscience, is a haynous fault, but especially not to bee moued with the example of a King, that hath dealt so graciously with him; that is a great wickednesse, hee is not onely cruell, but also wicked

and

and vnkinde, euen in that wherein hee had found kindnesse, which also addeth very much to his fault: for our Sauiour Christ saith, *Cui plus dimittitur*, to whom much is forgiuen, shee loued much, Luc. 7. 42
hee had a great debt forgiuen him, and therefore ought to haue shewed his loue in like sort vnto his fellow seruant, in forgiuing him his debt, according to our Sauiour Christs commandement, goe thou and doe likewise. For his Lu. 10. 37
fellowes debt was but a small summe, an hundred pence, and ought therefore the rather to moue him to haue beene pittifull, but he is neuer the better.

Euen as many now adayes to whom the Lord hath shewed great mercy in giuing them great abundance, and much increase, *frumenti, vini, atq; olei*, Ps. 4. 8
of corne, wine, and oyle, as the Prophet saith: Yea, the wicked liue and waxe old, and growe in wealth, their seede is Iob. 21. 7
established in their sight, their houses 8. &c.
are peaceable without feare, the rodde of GOD is not vpon them, their Bullocke gendreth, their Cowe calueth, and faileth not, their Children daunce

and

and make merry with Tabret, Harpe, and
Amos. 6.4 Organs, and spend their dayes in wealth,
Lying downe vpon their beds, eating fatt
Calues and Lambes, singing to the Violl,
and drinking wine in bowles, but no man
is sory for the affliction of *Ioseph*. Nay as
the Apostle saith, more then this, and
farre beyond the cruelty of this man,
towards his fellow seruant, many riche
couetous wretches oppresse the poore
Iam 2.6 by tyrannie, drawing them before the
Iudgment seate, clapping them vp in pri-
son, taking all their liuing and mainte-
nance from them, which this cruell ser-
uant did not: and so voide of all com-
passion and mercy, keepe their poore
neighbours there, till gentle death baile
them out of their bloudie fingers, thus
Pro. 14.31 reproching him that made them, and
Iam. 2. 7. blaspheming the worthy name after
which they are named. Therefore why
should they be honored, that thus dishon-
nor God, but euen weepe and howle for
& 5.1.2.3 the miseries that shall come vpon them,
because their riches are corrupt, and their
garments Moth-eaten, their gold and sil-
uer canckred, and the rust thereof shall be

a wit-

a witnesse against them, and eate their flesh as it were fire, thus they shall haue their rewarde: so that as the Philosopher saith; the soule is lost, that delighteth in couetousnesse. Matth.6.16 Plato.

Thus we see how he dealt with his fellow seruant. Now a word or two, how he was dealt withall, for his barbarous cruelty towards his fellow seruant.

1. First his other fellow seruants were greatly moued, at his vnmercifull dealings, insomuch that they accuse him to their maister, for indeed man (who is the principall worke of nature, crowned with glory and worship, and for whose sake the very Angels are sent to minister, especially for such as shall receiue the inheritance of saluation,) by nature loueth mercie: knowing there is no man but shall haue nede of mercy, as the same Apostle affirmeth, *Omnes sunt peccatores & desiciuntur gratiâ Dei*: All are sinners and stand in need of Gods grace, as the Prophet) plainely proueth throughout the Psalme. But God (our heauenly Father the Fountaine of all mercy, who is slowe to wrath, as the Psa.8.5 Heb.1.14 Rom.3.23 Psa.14.& 69.30.& 70.5. Iam.1.19

Apostle

Apostle saith,) hateth all cruelty, especially this cruelty, which the very Heathen (which never knew God nor his lawes,) could not endure, *viz. pontem frangere quem ipse transijt*, to breake and pull vp the bridge after himselfe hath escaped, that no man else may escape but be drowned; this is a great and a most sauadge cruelty.

Now his fellow seruants bring in their verdict against him for his discourtesie and monstrous inhumanity.

2. Then commeth in the second point. *viz.* that the King is altered, and his minde cleane changed, for whereas before there was no signe of anger at all in him, but extended his great fauour towards him, in forgiuing him the debt, verse. 27. now his mercye is turned into mere and seuere Iustice, and his good-will into extreame wrath.

3. Thirdly, whereas before he vsed no hard speeches, nor any vnkind words vnto him, now he calleth him lewd and euill seruant, verse. 32. wherein wee are to take héede how we incurre the Lords

Doctrine.

dis-

displeasure, by any hard and cruell dealinge towards our debtors or poore brethren. For euen as mercy coureth a multitude of sinnes, euen so cruelty in not hearing their complaints, and not shewing mercy, incurreth the wrath of God: For hee shall crie himselfe and not be heard, for the Lord is the aueanger of all such things. 1. Pet. 4. 8. 1. Tha. 4. 6. Deu. 16. 19.

A good Caueat for Magistrates, and all such as to whom the hearing and deciding of poore oppressed mens causes doth appertaine, that they be neither partiall on the one side, nor the other, for rewards, pitty, feare, or any fauour, but Iudge the people with righteous iudgement: whereby the integritie of ancient Iustice may be preserued, and not like vnto certaine Lacedemonian Ephori, vetchlesse Magistrates, that heard mens causes (as they say) with their harnesse eares, nor yet like Adrianus the Emperor, that cast all the supplications of his poore petitioners, into the water before their faces, but euen like the L. O. R. D. himselfe, the Iudge of all Iudges, this King, who accep-

De. 10.17 accepteth the riche and poore all alike,
Iob.34.19 yea the Prince, no more then the pea-
Mal.3.16 sant, but hearkneth and heareth, yea, and
Exo.22.23 reuengeth the wrongs done vnto the
Eccle.35. poore oppressed, bee they widdowes, fa-
therlesse, friendlesse, or comfortlesse, or
Ier.21.12. any wayes distressed, which is more ac-
13 ceptable to him then sacrifice: and to do
Pro.21.3 iustice betimes in the morning, *viz.* with-
out any delay, which is the bane of ma-
ny a poore mans cause, and the very
Wisd.6 shipwrack of him and his: for a great
iudgement shall they haue that beare
Ier.21.12 rule ouer the people. Therefore deliuer
the oppressed, out of the hands of the op-
pressor, least the wrath of the Lord goe
out like fire, and burne, that none can
quench it, because of sinne and wicked-
nesse.

4. Fourthly, the iust iudgment of the King, vpon him for his cruelty towards his fellow seruant, for whereas before hee condemned him to bee solde onely, now hee condemneth him to be tormented. Now wee see that his iudgment is more seuere, then it was before, whereby we haue to learne, that God standeth

otherwise affected to a malicious and mercilesse sinner, then to one that is but a bare sinner, such an one as falleth through weakenesse and imperfection, for there is great difference betwixt the infirmities of Gods children, and the vnregenerat, for although the godly fall through infirmity, yet they striue against sinne before they commit it, and are sorrowfull for it afterwards, but the wicked neither labour by prayer against it, neither are they grieued nor humbled afterwards: but as Salomon saith, *potius letantur cum male fecerint, & exultent in rebus pessimis*, they are glad when they haue done euill, and reioyce in things most wicked: *pius labitur in domo, sed non a domo*, the godly slip and fall in the house, but not out of it; they rise againe, but the wicked play as one that breaketh his neck, and neuer riseth againe: the godly haue the reliques of sinne remaining in them, but not the kingdome of Sathan reigning in them, but as for malicious sinners, the world was neuer so pestred with them, as it is now a dayes, against whom the Pro-

Ecc.19.16

Pro.2.14 & 14.16

Rom.6.

Malicious sinners.

phet prayeth with imprecations, that the Lord will not bee mercifull vnto them, because they sinne of malicious
Psal. 59.5 wickednesse: such are all that sitte in the
Ps. 1.1. seate of the scornefull, that snuffe and puffe when they are told of their sinnes, which is a token of reprobation, and contrarywise a signe of the child of God, when we can say with Dauid, *percutiat me iustus, & redarguat*, let the godly smite
Ps. 141.5 me friendly and reproue me, as Nathan
2. Sa. 12.7 reproued him for Vrias wife, which hee, (although a king) toke very patiently and cryed *peccaui*: a good example for all men. Malicious sinners, also are all Ahabs and Iezabels and Nebuchadnezzars, such couetous cormorant, Caterpillers and Church-robbers, as will neither suffer owre Naboth to enioy his Vineyard, nor the Minister his Withes quietly, whereby Gods people are not onely robbed of both temporall and spirituall foode, life and soule, but also God of his honor and glory. For take away liuing and maintenance, take away both life and learning, take away learning, and take away preaching: and take

away

away preaching and then what followeth, but all disorder and confusion, for where there is no vision, *viz.* preaching, there the people perish, by famine the people faint and dye: but no famine so grieuous, as that of the word of God, which breedeth and bringeth the leanenesse, faintnesse, and famishment of the soule. Yet such fellow seruants this world is full of, who although they haue no title, neither of Naboths Vineyard, nor Church-liuings, appointed *ad pios vsus*, to godly purposes, yet they will thrattle their fellow seruants for them: and such malicious sinners are also all that know a matter to bee naught, and yet will take part with it, and money to defend it, as many of our leud, vnconscionable Attorneis, and pelting petti-foggers doe, and so bee they that take money, and neuer speake a word in a mans cause, and such be those that iustifie the wicked and condemne the innocent, either for feare, fauour, bribes or rewards, which as Salomon saith is abhomination vnto the Lord, with many more, as keepers backe of the hyrelings

Pro. 29. 18

Amo. 8 11

Psa. 106. 15

Pro. 18. 5. & 17. 15.

wages, and common blasphemers: and such a malicious sinner was this cruell seruant, in dealing so cruelly with his fellow; and yet not so cruell as many now adayes, which cast their poore brethren in prison without any iust cause, taking all their liuing from them: wherfore it may be said vnto such kinde of fellowes, as that Father saith, *Si in ignem mittendus est, quia sua non dedit, vbi putas mittendus, qui aliena rapit,* if he shall be cast into the fire, that hath not giuen of his owne vnto the poore? whether shall hee bee cast that taketh theirs from them? if there be an *ite maledicti*, a goe yee cursed, for them that doe not visit and comfort those that are in prison, without succour and relefe: what remaineth for them that voyde of all compassion cast them into prison, there keeping them continually, without conscience, feare of God, or shame of ye world.

Aug. Mat. 3. 10

Greg. Naz. de pauper.

Our inferiors (saith one Father) do seeke for our mercy, as wee at time of neede doe seeke for Gods mercy. Therefore if a sinner that hath obtained mercy at Gods hands, many & sundry wayes, both

both in temporall and spirituall blessings, in so much that hee wanteth nothing that his heart can desire, and then be mercilesse vnto his brother, that humbly intreateth him to forbeare him a little, and will not forgiue him a light offence, but beyond all Christianitie, will take him by the throate, verse. 28. beate and trouble him, lade friuolous actions vpon him, cast him in prison, and so vndo him, his poore wife and children, as the manner of many mercilesse men is now adayes, whereby they can neither doe their dutie to God nor man, with any quiet conscience in their place and vocation, God will be wrathfully displeased, and reuenge the same, they shall perish with the sword, their wiues shalbe widowes, and their children fatherlesse, and as the Prophet saith; their sworde shall goe through their owne throate, and all for casting downe the poore and needie. Loe thus will God plague all cruell and couetous oppressors. This made Plato say, that where there are beggers in a towne, there are theeues and Church-robbers. Now therefore

Exod. 22. 23. 1. Thes. 4. 6

Psal. 37. 14. 15

Plato.

ſt wee, that beare the name of Chriſtians, acknowledging the poore our debtors and needy brethren, to be the members of Chriſt, are not aſhamed to banquet and feaſt, and let them ſtarue in the ſtreetes, nay here and trouble, whip, puniſh, and caſt them in priſon, and there to let them pine and periſh: ſhall not the very Heathen, that neuer heard of God, riſe vp in iudgement at the laſt day, before that iuſt Iudge, to accuſe and condemne vs as theeues, Church-robbers, and murderers, but eſpecially ſuch as maintaine their vaine delights and filthy pleaſures, with the goods of the poore, and patrimonie of Chriſts towards whome the diſtribution of our owne wealth ought to be extended, both by the law of God and man; ſhall not our owne conſciences alſo accuſe vs? and be as *mille teſtes*, a thouſand witneſſes againſt vs? when it ſhall be ſayd vnto vs *reddite rationem*, come giue an accompt? for our ſelues, Adam? *vbi es?* Where art thou? and how haſt thou walked in my commandements? an accompt for our bodyes, if they haue beene

Luc. 16. 2

Gen. 3. 9

kept

kept as the temples of the holy Ghost? 1.Cor.6.19.
an accompt of our soules, if they bee fit 1.Pet.2.25
to appeare in the sight and presence of Reu.21.12
the great sheepheard, an accompt for our Mat.12.36
workes, words, and thoughes? and also Wild.1.9
an accompt how we haue vsed our bre-
thren? Cain, *vbi est frater tuus* Abel? Gen. 4.9
where is thy brother? if there be *à discite*
ex me, learne of me, by the riche glutton,
that fared deliciously euery day, neglec- Lu.16.25
ting the miserable estate of poore Lazarus: what are all oppressors of their
poore brethren to expect at the dreadfull
day of iudgement, but euen with most
sorrowfull sobbing sighes, and mourne-
full moanes, fall a wishing that they
had neuer vsed such hard dealings, and
cruell oppression towards their poore
brethren and fellow seruants? but alas
now it is too late.

Therefore when a man hath had for-
giuenesse at Gods hands for his sinnes,
to forgiue our brother and fellow ser-
uant in like sort, is not a matter of guilt
but of duetie, *non opportuit*? ought est thou
not? vers. 33. Yes surely, hauing recei-
ued mercy, thou art bound to shew

mercy: if thou haue ten thousand talents forgiuen thee, oughtest not thou to forgiue an hundred pence? yes certainly, but here wee may plainly see, that couetousnesse, and crueltie, are alwayes companions, for if the King that cannot offend thee, (but thou him) shall forgiue thee: oughtest not thou to forgiue thy fellow seruant, whom thou must offend? and so stand in neede of his mercy?

Couetousnesse and Crueltie alwayes companions.

In as much therefore as thou hast not done as thou oughtest to haue done, I iudge thee out of thine owne mouth: for as Salomon saith, hee that findeth friendship ought to shew himselfe friendly againe towards others.

Lu. 19.22

Pro. 18.24

Now for the conclusion, the last verse 35. as I sayd is the key for the opening of this parable, and it lays vs all in this duetie.

God is our King, and we his subiects, we become his debtors by our sinnes, and as we loke to haue forgiuenesse at his hands, so wee must forgiue one an other. For as Saint Paul saith, this was

not

not written for *Abraham* onely: that hee was iustified, but also for all the faithfull: so likewise this parable, we must apply vnto our selues. Rom.4.23

For the point of forgiuing.

1. First wee must know it is *summi regis*, like a King, God our heauenly Father and King commandeth this duetie, as an honorable thing, that we be ready to forgiue, as wee would haue GOD forgiue vs, and doth accept it as done vnto himselfe, whatsoeuer wee doe vnto his poore members, whom he calleth his little ones, and his brethren. Pro.20.22 Mat.25.40

2. Secondly, as I forgaue you, is a matter of dutie and equitie, and not of equitie onely, but alls of Iustice, *non oportuit?* ought est thou not? seeing thou hast receiued mercy? yes verily, thou art bound to shew mercy.

3. Thirdly, in respect of the reward, for hee that sheweth mercy shall be rewarded with mercy. Yea in the kingdome of heauen, as our Sauiour saith.

Mat. 9.41. saith: For God is not vnrighteous, that
hee will forget your workes of mercy,
Heb. 6. 10. therefore bee mercifull after thy power.
Tob 4.8 for in so doing, thou shalt not onely ob-
Luc. 6. 13 teine forbearance, but also an acquit-
tance of thy debt.

4 Fourthly, for the punishment of
being mercilesse, for whereas before
God was milde, hee will bee wrathe,
whereas before hee was condemned to
be solde onely, now he shall bee griz-
uously tormented, vntill hee haue the
whole due, verse. 34. a most hegnie and
horrible sentence for mercilesse men to
thinke vpon.

Ps. 118. 12 The Prophet, his enemies shall come
about him like Bees, not waspes, be cause
hee gathered hony from them: so there
is profit to bee reaped from our ene-
mies, but the profit that we shall reape
by this Christian charitie, is, wee shall
(as it were) make God bound vnto vs
by forgiuing.

It is that, which some note vpon the
Ps. 119. 49 words of the Psalmist, where he saith:
remember mee according to thy word,

where-

wherein thou haſt cauſed mee to put my truſt, that is; wee conuent thee O Lord vpon thy promiſe, to forgiue vs our treſpaſſes, becauſe wee haue forgiuen our brethren their offences.

Now therefore, if the reward will not ſerue to ſtirre vs vp vnto this dutie of mercy towards our poore brethren: then the puniſhment muſt, which neuer faileth, viz. *ſic faciat vobis*; ſo hee ſhall doe vnto you.

And if ſome, perhaps vnderſtand it not, *quando adductus erit*, when hee ſhall be brought, hee ſhall vnderſtand, that hee hath not onely loſt the reward, but alſo incurred the puniſhment, from the which the Lord and Father of all mercy, vouchſafe to deliuer vs, for his ſonne Ieſus Chriſt his ſake, our onely Sauiour and redéemer. To whom with the holy Ghoſt, thrée perſons and one God, be all powre and glory, praiſe and dominion, now and for euer,

world without end,

Amen.